



IOWA SCHOOL INDICATORS RELEASED

(DES MOINES, IOWA) — August 19, 2004 — Iowa schools and students continue to show good results and improvements on a variety of state assessments and indicators, the state Department of Education announced today, including:

- Test scores to evaluate student proficiency;
- Average daily attendance rate;
- Average graduation rate;
- The number of highly qualified teachers; and
- School safety records.

The indicators, which contribute to the state's reporting requirements for the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, are used by educators as well as parents to help evaluate school programs and effectiveness.

"We're pleased with the efforts schools have made to improve," said Judy Jeffrey, interim director of the Iowa Department of Education. "Our state accountability system focuses on continuous improvement for everyone, even in schools where the majority of students are already high achieving. Our teachers and administrators are using the data to make solid, data-driven decisions about which instructional strategies work best for various groups of students, and what needs to be changed to improve learning."

Student Proficiency

Iowa students improved in five of eight achievement indicators, based on results from the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS, for elementary and middle schoolers) and Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED, for high schoolers) administered to 4th, 8th and 11th graders during the year. The five indicators that showed improvement were 4th grade reading and math, 8th grade reading and math, and the state graduation rate. The three areas that didn't improve were 11th grade reading and math, and average daily attendance.

Fewer than 5 percent (4.4) of school buildings were placed on the federal NCLB Schools in Need of Assistance (SINA) list because they didn't meet their proficiency goals or had less than 95 percent participation in the testing for two consecutive years. The 66 Iowa school buildings that received the SINA designation is an increase over the 11 schools cited in 2003. Nine (2.4 percent) districts also received the SINA designation, meaning they did not meet achievement goals for all three grade levels tested (4th, 8th and 11th). It is important to note that NCLB was expanded this year to apply to all school buildings and districts in the state; last year, it applied to only Title I buildings. SINA schools that receive Title I funds are subjected to sanctions required under the NCLB law.

State officials anticipated the increase in the number of SINA designations, Jeffery said, because every school that has at least 30 students within a subgroup (Black, Hispanic, Asian, White, low-income, English Language Learners, and Special Education) must meet strict achievement criteria and improvement guidelines. When a school misses the improvement criteria for even one subgroup at each of the tested grades, it is placed on the SINA list. Once a school is listed as SINA, it must show it has met its annual goals for two consecutive years before it can be removed from the list.

Iowa's continuous improvement efforts for all schools, which began in the late 1990s with the creation of Annual Progress Reports, Comprehensive School Improvement Plans, and intensive efforts to improve reading and mathematics instruction through research-based professional development, have contributed to the steady gains and relatively low number of SINA schools, Jeffrey said.

Each SINA Title I school must prepare an in-depth school improvement plan within 90 days of the designation. Each of these schools also has been assigned a support team whose activities and interventions have been structured by the state Department of Education. In-depth assistance to the schools is provided by regional Area Education Agency (AEA) staff.

"We've designed the support system to operate from the local level," Jeffrey said, "because the local educators have the best understanding of the students and their needs and can provide the best and most effective solutions," Jeffrey said. "This support would not have been possible without the full cooperation and partnership of the AEAs," she emphasized. "It is this spirit of cooperation and improvement that will continue to help our students realize the gains necessary to meet proficiency and continuous improvement goals."

The support teams already have helped several districts make necessary improvements. Four of the schools on last year's list of 11 are not on the list this year. Seven from last year remained on the list this year, and 59 schools are new to the list. Three Davenport schools – Fillmore Elementary, Hayes Elementary, and Jefferson Elementary – showed improvement and met their achievement goals but remained on the list because NCLB requires SINA schools to show two years of improvement before they are removed from the SINA list.

Average Daily Attendance and Graduation Rate

Nearly 100 percent of districts met the average daily attendance and graduation rate targets.

These are separate but contributing goals that schools and districts should use to improve student achievement, Jeffrey said, particularly among at-risk groups such as low-income or ELL students. "We're pleased with the overall numbers; however, the district-level and building numbers are most important in terms of diagnosing problem areas and developing solutions," Jeffrey said. "We ask districts to review their own statistics and then drill down as far as they can go. If a certain group of students has low attendance, for instance, that contributes to lower achievement, and districts must develop strategies for improvement."

All Iowa teachers "highly qualified"

Iowa continues to offer high quality teachers in districts of varying sizes, which also is an important indicator for school quality, Jeffrey said.

"We want to assure that all students, including those in high-poverty schools, have access to high quality teachers," Jeffrey said. Because Iowa requires that all teachers hold a valid teaching license and are properly assigned and endorsed to teach in the academic areas as defined by NCLB, all teachers meet the federal definition of highly qualified teacher.

"We have been recognized by the United States Department of Education for our quality teachers," Jeffrey said. "In addition to our rigorous teacher preparation and licensure, and high teacher standards, our mandatory two-year mentoring and induction for beginning teachers also helps ensure teachers are highly qualified."

2004 Student Achievement Indicators Iowa Department of Education Page 3/3

Safe Schools

All Iowa schools met overall safety requirements for the school year, with no schools placed on the federal NCLB "persistently dangerous" list. A persistently dangerous school is one that has violence-related, long-term suspensions or expulsions for more than 1 percent of the student population. Districts with unsafe schools receive a warning from the Department of Education, and must offer a school choice option.

Summary

The overall state results are helpful to set benchmarks and evaluate statewide trends, Jeffrey noted, but they cannot adequately diagnose specific learning needs or solutions.

"We've been able to use this data to determine, for instance, that although we continue to see above average achievement overall, we continue to see unacceptable achievement gaps. The cause for those gaps varies considerably by district, and so our efforts will be to supply the support teams so local districts can best diagnose their needs and develop interventions that will help student learning improve better and faster."

Additional Attachments/Resources

SINA List: attached

Statewide NCLB Accountability Workbook: http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/tqt/tc/index.html

Assessment and Achievement Data: www.iowaschoolprofiles.com

Teacher Quality: http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/nclb/documents.html

Persistently Dangerous Schools: http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/nclb/legis/chapter11.doc

2004 Report Card: www.state.ia.us/educate

###

School Name	Achievement		Participation				
0011001110					0	A 11	Fadaral Ossatian
	Math	Read	Math	Read	Graduation	Attendance	Federal Sanction
Bettendorf Middle School	X						NA
Boone Middle School	Χ						NA
Burlington - District	Х	Х			X		Improvement Plan
Cedar Rapids - District	Χ	Х					NA
Metro High			Χ	X			NA
Mc Kinley Middle School	Χ	Х					NA
Taft Middle School	Χ						NA
Wilson School		Х					NA
Harrison Elementary School	Χ	Х					Choice
Johnson Elementary School		Х					Choice
Clinton - Washington Middle School	Х	Х					NA
College – Prairie High School	Χ	Х					NA
Council Bluffs - District	Χ	Х					Improvement Plan
Woodrow Wilson Junior High	Χ	Х					NA
Davenport - District	Χ	Χ					Improvement Plan
Central High School			Х	Х			NA NA
Kimberly Center			X	Х			NA
Wood Intermediate	Χ						NA
Frank L Smart Intermediate		X					NA
Sudlow Intermediate		Х					NA
Williams Intermediate	Χ	X					NA
J B Young Intermediate	Χ	X					NA
Buchanan Elementary	Χ	X					Choice, SES
Hayes Elementary		Х					Choice, SES*
Jefferson Elementary		X					Choice*
Fillmore Elementary	Χ						Choice*
Des Moines – East High			Х	Х			NA
Hoover High School			Х	Х			NA
Lincoln High School			Х	Х			NA
North High School			Х	Х			NA
Roosevelt High School			Х	Х			NA

School Name	Achievement		Participation				
	Math	Read	Math	Read	Graduation	Attendance	Federal Sanction
Scavo High School			Х	Х			NA
Callanan Middle School			Х	Х			NA
Harding Middle School			Х				NA
Hiatt Middle School			Х				NA
Hoyt Middle School	Х						NA
McCombs Middle School	Х						NA
Meredith Middle School	Χ	Х					NA
Merrill Middle School		Х					NA
Edmunds Fine Arts Academy	Χ						Choice
Moulton Elementary	Х						Choice, SES
Wallace Elementary School		Х					Choice
Dubuque – Central Alternative High			Х	Х			NA
Washington Junior High School		Х					NA
Fort Dodge – District	Х	Х					Improvement Plan
Fort Dodge High School	Χ	Х					NA
Phillips Middle School	Χ	Х					NA
Fair Oaks Middle School	Χ	Х					NA
Iowa City – District	Χ						Improvement Plan
Northwest Junior High School	Χ	Χ					NA
SouthEast Junior High School	Χ	Х					NA
Keokuk High School	Χ						NA
Keokuk Middle School		Х					NA
Marshalltown - District						X	Improvement Plan
Marshalltown High School			Х	Х			NA NA
Woodbury Elementary School	Χ						Choice
Muscatine High School			Х				NA
Ottumwa - District	Х	Х				X	Improvement Plan
Ottumwa High School	Х	Х					NA
Evans Middle School	Х						NA
Perry Elementary		Х					Choice
Saydel – Woodside Middle		Х					NA
Sioux City - East High School			Х	Х			NA
East Middle School			Х	Х			NA

School Name	Achievement		Participation				
	Math	Read	Math	Read	Graduation	Attendance	Federal Sanction
Hunt Elementary School	Х						Choice
Southeast Polk Junior High		Х					NA
Storm Lake - District		Х					Improvement Plan
Storm Lake Middle School	Х	Х					Choice
Waterloo – West High			X	X			NA
Bunger Middle School	X	X					NA
Central Middle School	Х	Х					NA
Logan Middle School		Х					NA
West Des Moines – Valley High			Х	Х			NA
Southwoods High			Х	Х			NA
Walnut Creek Campus			Х				NA

^{*} Three Davenport schools – Fillmore Elementary, Hayes Elementary, and Jefferson Elementary – showed improvement and met their achievement goals but remained on the list because NCLB requires SINA schools to show two years of improvement before they are removed from the SINA list.

Explanation:

Last year, only schools receiving Title I funds were identified as SINA. (A Title I school is a school that receives federal funds based on their low-income percentage to aid students with educational needs.) 2004 is the first year all public schools can be identified. It also is the first year districts are eligible for a SINA designation.

District: In Iowa, all public school districts are eligible and accept Title I funds to provide Title I services in their eligible buildings. Public school

districts make the SINA list if a) they did not have at least 95% of students participate in Iowa Tests of Basic Skills or Iowa Tests of Educational Development, or an alternate assessment in reading or math for grades 4, 8, or 11; b) the school did not reach its achievement

goal for two consecutive years in either reading or math for all grades 4, 8 and 11.

School: Buildings within each district make the SINA list if a) they didn't have at least 95% of students participate in Iowa Tests of Basic Skills or

Iowa Tests of Educational Development, or an alternate assessments; b) the school didn't reach its AYP goal for two consecutive years in

either reading or math for grades 4, 8 and 11.

Subject: The category that needs assistance: Reading, math, or number of students participating in assessments.

Sanction: Federal sanctions apply to Title I funded SINA schools based on how long they have been on the SINA list. Identified schools must show

two consecutive years of improvement to be removed from the list.

- NA means the school is not a Title I school and so is not subject to federal sanctions. Many of them, however, are required by their districts to develop improvement strategies at the building level.
- Any district on the list must file a corrective action plan with the state as part of their state Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP).
- The first year a school is on the list, a Title I funded school must offer public school choice to their parents, meaning they must notify parents that they can choose to attend a non-SINA school within the district, if one is available.
- The second year a Title I funded school is on the list, it must offer choice plus supplemental educational services (SES) to low-income students. Iowa districts can choose from 14 state-approved supplemental service providers that offer services such as tutoring or after-school interventions.
- The third year they are on the list, a Title I funded school must offer choice plus supplemental services to low-income students, and the district must initiate additional corrective actions.

###